

1908.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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# INSPECTION OF MACHINERY:

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR 1907-8.

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.*

The Hon. the MINISTER IN CHARGE OF THE INSPECTION OF MACHINERY DEPARTMENT to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

MY LORD,—  
Inspection of Machinery Department, Wellington, 24th June, 1908.  
I do myself the honour to transmit herewith, for Your Excellency's information, the report of the Inspection of Machinery Department of the Dominion for the financial year ended the 31st March, last.

I have, &c.,

His Excellency the  
Right Hon. Lord Plunket, K.C.V.O.,  
Governor of New Zealand.

J. A. MILLAR,  
Minister in Charge of the Inspection of  
Machinery Department.

The CHIEF INSPECTOR OF MACHINERY to the Hon. the MINISTER IN CHARGE OF THE INSPECTION OF MACHINERY DEPARTMENT.

SIR,—  
Inspection of Machinery Department,  
Customhouse Buildings, Wellington, 16th April, 1908.  
I have the honour to submit herewith the annual report on the operations of the Inspection of Machinery Department during the twelve months which ended on the 31st March, 1908.

The work of the Department steadily increases every year in nearly every branch of its work. The increase in the number of boilers inspected is very marked this year. Flax-milling has been very prosperous throughout the year, and until quite recently good prices have been maintained. Never, I believe, in the history of New Zealand, have so many flax-mills been running. Sawmilling is also expanding rapidly along the Main Trunk Railway, as the railway communications are made. Dairy factories, especially in the Auckland Province, are being installed almost everywhere. Shipbuilders have been fairly busy in the Auckland District, and engineering firms generally have been better employed this year than they were last year. A great many of the suitable land-locked harbours have quite a fleet of oil-engine-powered launches and motor-boats, mostly under 5 tons, engaged for pleasure and for hire purposes. Nearly all of these have been built in the Dominion, and a great number of the oil-engines as well, with which they are fitted.

The increase of land motor-cars driven by oil is also very noticeable. This branch of engineering has made rapid strides both for marine propulsion and for land-locomotion.

Liquid fuel, however, as a fuel for boilers at sea, has not yet been in use in New Zealand. In the United States mercantile marine it has rapidly grown into favour. This is not unexpected, as the oil is indigenous to that country. In the future, however, should oil be found in quantity at Taranaki or Gisborne, it will no doubt be used largely for this purpose in the Dominion. The Admiralty in Great Britain have decided to establish storage oil-tanks at various ports in the United Kingdom, and they are adopting this oil fuel in several of their latest fast destroyers.

The consumption of oil as a fuel has never been so low as sanguine inventors expected. Ships up to 14,000 tons now make very long sea-voyages with oil alone as a fuel, so that its trustworthiness may be taken as proved.

I have been able to visit most of the District Inspectors' offices during the year, and find that in the Taranaki and Wanganui districts a very marked increase in the work has taken place there. These districts have now grown to such an extent that I would recommend that in the near future an Inspector should be permanently placed at, say, Palmerston North to relieve the officer at Wanganui of all the southern portion of his large district. He could also take in all the new work along the North Island Trunk Railway from Marton. If such a centre were made it would not only relieve the present congestion of work at the Wanganui office, but would be of great benefit to steam-users having a man among them who could deal with matters promptly as they came along, thus saving great delays.