

1909.
NEW ZEALAND.

MARINE DEPARTMENT:

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1908-9.

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

MY LORD,—

Marine Department, Wellington, 7th August, 1909.

I do myself the honour to transmit herewith, for Your Excellency's information, the report of the Marine Department of the Dominion for the financial year ended the 31st March last.

I have, &c.,

J. A. MILLAR.

His Excellency the Right Hon. Baron Plunket, Governor of New Zealand.

SIR,—

Marine Department, Wellington, 26th April, 1909.

I have the honour to make the following report on the work of this Department during the financial year ended the 31st March last.

Shipping and Seamen Acts.—The Shipping and Seamen Acts, 1903 and 1905, have been consolidated by the Statutes Consolidation Commission, and the consolidated Act was passed by Parliament last session. The Act has since been assented to by His Majesty the King, and a Proclamation of such assent was gazetted on the 11th March last, which brought the Act into force on that date. An amending Bill to embody certain provisions of recent Imperial Acts, and to make certain other amendments, is now being prepared for introduction into Parliament during the coming session.

Mercantile Marine Offices.—The duties connected with the engagement and discharge of seamen have been satisfactorily carried out at the various ports, and everything has worked smoothly. When "The Shipping and Seamen Act, 1903," was passed, provision was made to enable single engagements and discharges to be effected on board ships, subject to their being afterwards ratified at a mercantile marine office. This is a convenience to shipmasters, but cases have occurred in which the certificates of discharge given on board have not been properly filled in, which has prevented men obtaining employment until the matter could be rectified. The only way to prevent this laxity is to make it compulsory that the transactions shall be effected before a Superintendent, and the question of doing so will have to be considered if masters are not more careful in preparing the discharges.

The arrangement under which the Superintendent at Lyttelton received assistance in his office-work from a Customs officer not having proved satisfactory, it has been discontinued, and Captain Wilcox, chief officer of the training-ship "Amokura," has been appointed Assistant Superintendent and Surveyor of Ships at the port. The work at Dunedin and Port Chalmers having increased to such an extent as to render the appointment of another officer necessary, Captain Fraser, master of the Defence steamer "Janie Seddon," has been transferred to the position of Assistant Superintendent and Surveyor of Ships, and he has also been appointed an Inspector of Compasses.

Owing to the increase of the work in the Auckland office another clerk has been appointed.

At the four principal ports the Superintendents have taken over the duty of seeing that sailing-vessels leaving for Australian ports are provided with sufficient provisions, of collecting fees for the survey of steamers and sailing-ships, and of selling charts, &c.

Appended is a return showing the number of seamen engaged and discharged at the various ports, and the fees received therefor.

Returns are also appended showing the accidents to seamen, the amounts paid to disabled seamen under section 119 of "The Shipping and Seamen Act, 1908," the accidents to persons other than seamen employed in connection with ships, and the prosecutions of seamen by masters and others for various offences.