

case employees were killed. This certainly is a very fine record, for during that time over 70,000 boiler-inspections have been made. This year alone some 6,212 boiler-inspections were reported. I trust that nothing in the future will mar such a record. During the last twenty years pressures have increased more than 50 per cent., and this demands more careful boiler-examination at the Inspectors' hands.

A number of accidents with machinery took place during the year. Some of the accidents were fatal. It is difficult to eliminate accidents to those who have to be amongst moving machinery. With the every-day working in close proximity to danger the employee often becomes careless, and takes risks that frequently lead to accident.

Returns Nos. 5 and 6 give full particulars of each reported accident.

POSTAL AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS.

Both the Postal and Police Departments have rendered valuable assistance to this Department. The Police Department has especially assisted in prosecution cases and in making inquiries concerning those steam-users who failed to take up their certificates. Machinery-owners are losers in this respect, as a considerable reduction is made for certificates taken up on or before the due date.

EXAMINATION OF MARINE ENGINEERS.

All the candidates whose papers were in order were examined during the year, and nothing has occurred to mar the efficient and smooth working of our system of examination for marine engineers throughout the Dominion.

Examinations were conducted at Auckland,* Christchurch,* Dunedin,* Gisborne, Greymouth,* Hamilton,* Hokitika, Invercargill,* Napier,* Nelson,* Palmerston North, Russell, Timaru,* Wanganui,* Wellington,* and Whangarei.*

The nominal horse-power of one steam-vessel was increased during the year to bring it up to not less than 66-nominal-horse power. This rendered the ship one on which an engineer might qualify for examination for the second-class engineer's certificate, and enabled one of the ship's engineers to sit for his second-class certificate.

The candidates who sat for examination during the year numbered 273. Of this number, fifty failed. The different grades of examination were: first-class marine engineer, second-class marine engineer, third-class marine engineer, river engineer, marine-engine driver, first-class engineer of auxiliary sea-going powered vessels, second-class engineer of auxiliary sea-going powered vessels, and restricted-limits engineer of auxiliary-powered vessels.

The fees for these examinations amounted to £240 10s.

Return No. 13 gives the names of the successful candidates and the various grades for which they passed, the total number of applicants, fees payable, and the number of candidates who failed to pass such examinations.

EXPLOSIVES.

At the Port of Wellington 176 permits were granted for the carriage of explosives on passenger and non-passenger ships.

ANNUAL SURVEY OF STEAMSHIPS AND AUXILIARY-POWERED VESSELS.

At the close of the year this branch of the Departments' work was well up to date. Several new vessels were built in New Zealand during the year, and during the whole period of their construction were under the close supervision of the Department's Surveyors.

Forty-seven of the vessels surveyed were fitted with new propeller-shafts, nine had new propellers fitted, two had new propeller-blades fitted, one had a new propeller-boss fitted, one had new engines installed, two had new high-pressure cylinders fitted, and three had new boilers provided.

The total number of surveys made during the year total 362. The fees for these surveys amounted to £2,058 10s.

A great many steamer excursion-trips were run during the year, both in harbour and daylight home-trade limits; a large number of passengers being carried without mishap. In the intercolonial trade numerous applications for extra accommodation for passengers were made, and after the additional berths and equipments were provided these requests were granted.

Return No. 14 gives the total number of steamers and of auxiliary-powered vessels surveyed by the Surveyors of the Department during the year. It also gives their names and registered tonnage, the nominal horse-power and indicated horse-power of steam-vessels, the brake horse-power of auxiliary-powered vessels, and the nature of machinery and propeller.

The following are the details of survey in the case of several of the ships:—

S.s. "Beatrice."—The boiler was taken out of this vessel, and a new boiler-bed and chocks fitted. The boiler was tested by hydraulic pressure before being placed on board.

S.s. "Corinna."—Several plates and stiffeners in the bunks of this vessel were renewed. The combustion-chambers' plating of the main boiler was patched at the defective parts. The engines and machinery received a general overhaul.

O.E.V. "Colleen."—This vessel received an extensive overhaul. A new oil-engine of 20 brake horse-power was fitted. All the planking above the water-line was renewed, and two planks below the water-line. Six frames and the copper sheathing were renewed. The planking and timbers of the hull were refastened throughout.

* Places at which examinations have been held more than once during the year.