

"The total number of candidates examined during the year was ninety-three, of whom fifty-four were for foreign-going certificates and twenty-nine for home-trade certificates. There were also ten candidates for local limited certificates, and sixty-two candidates for sight-test examinations. The following percentages of failures occurred: Foreign-going, 49 per cent.; home trade, 52 per cent.; river limits, 50 per cent.; and sight-tests 12 per cent.

"During the year there have been six examinations held for the extra-masters' certificates. As this examination calls for extensive knowledge it is not surprising that only one candidate was successful in passing the examination.

"Five candidates failed in the colour-vision test, one of whom was subsequently allowed a special examination by the Department, the result of which confirmed the decision of the Examiner who conducted the first examination. The examinations appear to be conducted similarly to those carried out in Great Britain by the Board of Trade, with the exception of the signalling portion, which will be brought up to date as soon as the automatic-signalling lamps arrive from England."

DECEASED SEAMEN'S ESTATES.

The estates of sixty deceased seamen, amounting to £1,083 9s. 11d., have come into the hands of the Department during the year, and, including estates previously received, forty have been finally administered. A statement is appended showing the estates dealt with and those outstanding. The sum of £75 5s. has been paid into the consolidated revenue for estates unclaimed for over six years.

WRECKS AND CASUALTIES.

Seventy-eight inquiries, involving eighty-three vessels, have been held during the year, of which sixty-three were preliminary and fifteen Magisterial. Those on or near the coast of the Dominion were seventy-five, of 76,259 tons register, as compared with sixty-three, of 54,778 tons, for the previous year. The number of lives lost was thirty-one, as compared with nineteen in the previous year. Of these, seventeen were lost in the auxiliary schooner "Jubilee" and four in the auxiliary schooner "Kahu" (both vessels were supposed to have foundered), six in the capsizing of the auxiliary schooner "Omaka," one in the boiler-explosion on the p.s. "Clutha," and one in the stranding of the "Te Teko." The second officer of the s.s. "Rimu" was carried overboard by a heavy sea and drowned, and a passenger on the s.s. "Monowai" disappeared and is presumed to have been lost overboard. A return is appended showing the casualties and an analysis thereof.

MERCANTILE MARINE OFFICES.

The work of these offices has been carried out in a very satisfactory manner, and the Superintendents and their staff are deserving of commendation for the way in which they have carried out their duties.

The Department has had to withhold the discharges of a good many seamen who have deserted from or failed to join their ships.

Appended is a statement showing the number of seamen engaged and discharged at the various ports during the year, and the fees received for engagements and discharges. The number engaged was 23,125, and the number discharged 22,904. The fees received amounted to £3,473 15s. 9d. During the previous year the engagements were 21,094 and the discharges 20,553, the amount of fees being £2,809 15s.

The transactions at the principal ports were:—

			Engagements.		Discharges.		Fees.		
							£	s.	d.
Auckland	..	..	..	..	7,869	7,846	1,211	1	6
Wellington	..	..	..	..	8,114	8,068	1,201	9	0
Lyttelton	..	..	..	..	2,582	2,467	391	3	0
Dunedin and Port Chalmers	..	..	..	..	2,141	2,129	334	11	0
During the previous year they were:—									
Auckland	..	..	..	..	6,723	6,627	904	2	6
Wellington	..	..	..	..	7,790	7,481	1,054	9	6
Lyttelton	..	..	..	..	2,102	1,888	284	5	6
Dunedin and Port Chalmers	..	..	..	..	2,272	2,470	298	19	6

The amounts paid under the provisions of section 6 of the Shipping and Seamen Amendment Act, 1911, to sick and injured seamen totals £20,288 6s. 6d., as compared with £13,163 8s. 8d. for the previous year.

HARBOURS.

This Department has the control of harbours for which Harbour Boards have not been constituted, and the buoys and beacons at these places have been overhauled, cleaned, and painted under the direction of Captain Bollons, of the s.s. "Hinemoa." He has also attended to the coastal buoys and beacons during the vessel's periodical lighthouse trips.

A large number of plans of harbour-works, including wharves proposed to be constructed, has been submitted to and dealt with by the Department. Those which met the Department's requirements were approved by the Governor-General in Council in accordance with the provisions of the Harbours Act, 1908. A return of the Orders in Council giving the necessary approval is appended.

The sum of £1,009 16s. 4d. was collected for pilotage and port charges in respect of harbours under the control of the Department, as compared with £783 3s. 3d. in the previous year.

A return of the amounts collected at the various ports, including the amounts collected at ports under the control of Harbour Boards, is appended.

Appended is a report by the Marine Engineer on the works dealt with by him during the year.