

VI. H.M. SLOOPS "LABURNUM" AND "VERONICA."

17. These two vessels have continued their duties of visiting the islands in the South Pacific and ports in New Zealand.

18. H.M.S. "Veronica" visited the following islands during the winter: Fiji, Ocean Island, Gilbert and Ellice Group, Rotumah, Lau Group, and Tonga. During the year the following ports in New Zealand were visited: Wellington, Wanganui, New Plymouth, Nelson, Whangaroa, Russell, Port Underwood, Napier, Dunedin, Bluff, Oamaru, Timaru, Lyttelton, Auckland. Commander Philip Hordern took over the command of H.M.S. "Veronica" in September, 1924, from Commander V. B. Cardwell, who returned to England. This ship was recommissioned on the 1st May, 1924.

19. H.M.S. "Laburnum" visited the following islands during the winter: Fiji, Samoa, Cook Islands, Murea, Tahiti, Niue, Keppel Island, Tonga. During the year the following ports in New Zealand were visited: Waikeke Island, Gisborne, Napier, Timaru, Akaroa, Lyttelton, Whangarei, Kawau, New Plymouth, Wellington, Wanganui, Milford Sound, Westport, Picton, Auckland.

VII. R.F.A. "NUCULA."

20. The oil-tank vessel "Nucula" was transferred from the Imperial to the New Zealand Government on the 27th May, 1924, at Suva, Fiji, after having completed with fuel certain ships of the Special Service Squadron. This vessel has been lent by the Admiralty to the New Zealand Government, as it is impossible for a squadron of oil-burning vessels to be completed with fuel at ports on the station at which H.M.S. "Chatham" formerly obtained coal.

21. As the "Nucula" was previously attached to the China Station, and in consequence carried a Chinese crew, certain alterations to accommodation were required to render her suitable for a New Zealand mercantile crew. These have now been completed. The ship was docked and refitted during March, 1925, and is ready to perform her duties on the station.

VIII. SPECIAL SERVICE SQUADRON.

22. The Special Service Squadron, consisting of H.M. ships "Hood," battle-cruiser, 41,200 tons; "Repulse," battle-cruiser, 26,500 tons; "Delhi," cruiser, 4,650 tons; "Dragon," cruiser, 4,650 tons; "Dauntless," cruiser, 4,650 tons; "Danae," cruiser, 4,650 tons; "Dunedin," cruiser, 4,650 tons, and H.M.A.S. "Adelaide," 5,560 tons, arrived in the Dominion on the 24th April, 1924. The squadron was commanded by Vice-Admiral Sir Frederick Field, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., and the cruisers were under the command of Rear-Admiral the Hon. Sir Hubert Brand, K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., C.B. The battle-cruisers first visited Wellington and then proceeded to Auckland, where they were joined by the cruisers, which had previously visited Lyttelton, Dunedin, and the Bluff. During the passage to Auckland the vessels of the squadron stopped for a few hours on the 9th May off Napier and Gisborne. The whole Special Service Squadron sailed on the 18th May to continue its cruise, which lasted until September, 1924.

23. During his visit to New Zealand, Vice-Admiral Sir Frederick Field took the greatest interest in the organization and training of the New Zealand Division of the Royal Navy. He was good enough to inspect the ship's company of H.M.S. "Chatham" at Wellington; and also the New Zealand ratings under training, H.M.S. "Philomel," and the Naval Base at Devonport, during his visit to Auckland.

IX. RECRUITING FOR THE SEAGOING FORCES.

24. The following table shows the numbers finally entered during the period 1st April, 1924, to 31st March, 1925:—

Regimental District.	Ordinary Seamen and Boys.	Stokers.	Artificers and Artisans.	Cooks and Stewards.	Other Ratings.	Total.
Auckland	10	..	..	..	1	11
Paeroa	2	..	..	..	..	2
Whangarei	2	..	..	..	..	2
Hamilton	1	..	..	..	..	1
Wellington	5	..	..	..	..	5
Palmerston North ..	10	2	1	..	..	13
Napier	3	..	..	..	..	3
Hawera	4	..	..	..	..	4
Nelson	5	..	..	..	..	5
Christchurch	7	..	..	..	..	7
Dunedin	6	..	..	1	..	7
Invercargill	2	..	..	..	..	2
Totals	57	2	1	1	1	62