relating to the most used ports within the Dominion was revised by the various local Harbour Boards, thus ensuring that ships would be enabled to obtain the most up-to-date information for navigating this Dominion's ports used by them, and much care has been taken to provide only information which has been obtained from a quite reliable source. Resulting from the tidal observations and data supplied by the Surveyor-General, Department of Lands and Survey, it has been possible to issue the usual tide-tables relating to six of the main ports, and arrangements have now been completed and the necessary data is to hand for the purpose of providing a very desirable extension to these tide-tables by including the tide-tables for the growing port of New Plymouth. This will be done in the next (1928) edition of the Nautical Almanac, which is now in course of preparation. The daily tide-tables, and the tables of daily tidal streams for Tory Channel and for French Pass, are an essential requirement to those ships whose progress depends to a great extent upon the rise and fall of the tides and the direction and strength of tidal streams around our coasts. The publication also contains the necessary astronomical ephemeris as used for navigation by nautical astronomy; daily sunset and sunrise tables for the principal towns; and much information of importance to ships and those who navigate them. Owing to popular request it has been decided that in future this publication shall be issued annually early in November, so as to enable the information which it contains to become earlier available for ships proceeding overseas.

Wireless Telegraphy on Ships.

The Department has always maintained that extension of the Wireless on Ships Regulations to still smaller ships must be a matter of gradual application, or otherwise the movement will break down of unreasonableness or impracticability.

The long coastal drift of the fishing-vessel "Awarua" gave fresh energy to the demand that our regulations should go further despite the fact that they now go further than the regulations of any other country. It was decided to reinvestigate the position with a view to seeing whether extension might reasonably be insisted upon, and to this end conferences were held with northern shipowners' representatives at Auckland, and with the representatives of all other owners at Wellington.

Objection to extension of the regulations was made on the following grounds:—

(*a*) That the loss of life at sea was not such as to justify a demand for extension. This argument was difficult to withstand in view of the fact that during the past two years only two lives have been lost through marine casualties to ships, and as these two were lost through the lifeboat capsizing in the breakers on the beach, wireless would not have availed to save them. The only argument against the contention is that a marine casualty may happen at any time. It is interesting to note that during the past two years there have been approximately fifty thousand departures of vessels from all ports, and with every such departure there is the possibility of loss of life, yet only two lives have been lost on our coasts.

(*b*) That wireless on a ship which becomes a casualty does not necessarily mean the saving of the lives of those on board. This, of course, has to be admitted. There are many circumstances in which a ship may be casualtied where it would be impossible for another ship to render assistance. On the other hand, of course, the circumstances may be such that another ship can render assistance.

(*c*) That the extension of wireless to smaller ships would result in hardship to many of the masters and mates at present employed on them.

The contention is that many of the masters and mates employed on these smaller ships are middle-aged and elderly men who would be quite unable to qualify as wireless signallers, or even if they could, it would take them a long time, during which they would be ashore without pay. The point is that in many cases the masters and mates who were unable to qualify would be forced out of the only employment they are likely to obtain, in order to make way for younger men who had qualified in wireless, but who were comparatively inexperienced in the working of these small vessels.

This objection was strongly supported by the Secretaries to the Merchant Service Guild, both at Auckland and Wellington. The Merchant Service Guild have been so wonderfully helpful in doing their part to make the installation of wireless on home-trade vessels an economically practicable thing that their present attitude towards further extension was entirely unexpected. That they do object to further extension at the present juncture is clear evidence that such extension would result in inflicting hardship on a considerable number of masters and mates in the class of vessels under consideration.

Up to date 181 deck officers have passed the wireless signaller's examination.

There was a strong conviction among shipowners and Merchant Service Guild representatives that the best solution lay in the wireless telephone. In its present stage of development, however, it is certainly not a practicable solution. Certainly it is in use—for instance, at Port Phillip in connection with the signal service—but these are land stations supplied by land power-lines, and any height and span of aerial necessary for transmission can be obtained. It is a very different thing when it comes to fitting a plant into a small ship where there are restrictions in space, power, and aerial. I am advised that the ordinary wireless-telegraph plant is capable of transmitting a message about ten times as far as a wireless-telephone plant with the same power and aerial.