

line dipped to a grade of 1 in 40 some little distance from the mine and the runaway train attained an estimated speed of 60 miles per hour. It failed to negotiate a bend in the line and crashed through a bridge into a creek below. The engine-driver was killed. The locomotive was well equipped with hand and air brakes, but these were not sufficient to control the load under the conditions prevailing at the time of the accident. No doubt, if the air-brakes had been coupled to the loaded trucks the accident would not have occurred.

One of the accidents which occurred with uncertificated machinery illustrates the grave risks taken by persons with little or no knowledge of mechanics. A man was killed by flying fragments of a circular saw. From investigations into the cause of the accident it was found that the saw had been cracked for some time and that it was driven at a very dangerous speed. The power was supplied by a motor-car by means of a belt drive from a rear wheel. The speed of the saw spindle was 4,440 revolutions per minute and the speed of the saw at its perimeter 23,130 ft. per minute, whereas the maximum safe peripheral speed of a well-conditioned circular saw of the type used is considered to be 15,000 ft. per minute. Under these conditions the saw was bound to fail, and unfortunately it flew to pieces when the owner was standing directly in front of it. The plant had not been inspected by the Department.

Of the 50 non-fatal accidents reported 3 were connected with machinery not subject to inspection by the Department. Sixteen of the remaining accidents occurred at wood-working machines, of which 9 were circular saws; 5 occurred at transmission machinery, 4 at lifts, and 3 at power-presses. Hand and finger injuries were received in 32 cases, and 20 of the accidents were with machinery which was fully protected. Seventeen of the injured persons were under twenty-one years of age, and 19 of the accidents could be attributed only to carelessness. The circumstances of every accident were inquired into by the Department's officers, and, where possible, additional safeguards were fitted to prevent similar accidents. During the year circular instructions having reference to the guarding of mincing machines and to the safe speeds of circular saws were issued.

EXAMINATIONS OF LAND ENGINEERS, ENGINE-DRIVERS, AND ELECTRIC-TRAM DRIVERS.

These examinations were held at the various offices of the Inspectors of Machinery throughout the Dominion at the regular intervals provided for in the regulations—viz., in the months of May, August, November, and February. In addition, a few special examinations were granted, but the holding of special examinations is not encouraged, as it is considered that the regular examinations are of sufficient frequency, and, except in very exceptional circumstances, candidates are expected to arrange that they may attend the scheduled examinations.

The full list of places where the examinations were held is shown in an appended return, as also is the number of candidates examined at each place. The classes of certificates for which examinations were held were: Extra first-class stationery engineer, first-class engine-driver, second-class engine-driver, steam winding-engine driver, electric winding-engine driver, locomotive-engine driver, traction-engine driver, locomotive- and traction-engine driver, electric-tram driver, and electric-tram driver (one-man car).

The total number of candidates examined was 386. Of this number, 269 were successful and 117 failed in their examinations; 313 certificates were issued, which includes 269 to successful candidates in their examinations. The remainder were replacements and issues under the provisions of sections 53, 59, and 62 of the Inspection of Machinery Act, 1928.

PROSECUTIONS.

During the year legal proceedings for offences under the various statutes administered by the Department were instituted in 43 cases. Prosecutions under each Act were as follows: Fisheries, 29; Shipping and Seamen Act, 7; Inspection of Machinery, 7.

FISHERIES.

The report of the Chief Inspector of Fisheries, which is appended hereto, deals exhaustively with the operations of this Division during the year.

The sale of rock-oysters was well maintained, the total quantity disposed of being 4,414 sacks, realizing £5,046 17s. 8d., compared with 4,360 sacks, realizing £5,430 8s. 5d. during the previous season. The decreased revenue was due to a reduction in the retail price to the public.

WHALING.

The position with respect to the International Whaling Convention of 1931, referred to in the last annual report, is that up to the present time no advice has been received that the ratifications deposited are sufficient to bring the Convention into operation.

With respect to the local whaling-stations, that at Whangamumu did not operate at all last season, while the Tory Channel station took only 18 whales, yielding 92 tons of oil. The total catch from the two stations in the previous season was 110 whales—48 from Whangamumu and 62 from Tory Channel, yielding 240 tons and 290 tons respectively. The decreased operations last season were due to inability to dispose of the previous season's production. It is hoped that the current season's operations will, in the interests of the industry, show better results.

L. B. CAMPBELL, Secretary.