

ments. The Board of Trade, London, have supplied every possible information for conducting these examinations, and the Agent-General procured the necessary instruments, books, and charts; the instruments comprise terrestrial globes, barometers, thermometers, and hydrometers.

The present subjects for examination for masters' and mates' certificates in New Zealand are identical with those of the Board of Trade, and the examinations are conducted on exactly the same lines.

A new book of regulations relating to the examination of masters and mates in the mercantile marine has been published. Candidates will find this book most useful, as it contains all the information they are likely to require. It can be obtained at the principal Customhouses in the colony, at a cost of 1s. each.

Owing to the retirement of Captain Robertson, Examiner at Auckland, the vacancy has been filled by the appointment of Captain John Adamson, an experienced master mariner, who has only lately retired from the sea. It was found necessary to have another Examiner of Masters and Mates for the Port of Wellington, owing to the occasional absence of the Principal Examiner on departmental duties. Consequently, Sir Arthur Douglas, formerly in the Imperial navy and now Under-Secretary of Defence, was appointed Examiner.

I have, &c.,

GEO. ALLMAN,

Principal Examiner of Masters and Mates.

The Secretary, Marine Department, Wellington.

The COLLECTOR, Wairau, to the SECRETARY, Marine Department.

(Memorandum.)

31st January, 1898.

IN accordance with your instructions I examined, on the 10th December last, the oyster-beds occupied by the under-mentioned settlers, and beg to report as follows:—

*Tory Channel Beds.*

*Peter Ewing, Hitana Bay.*—Since the date of my last inspection I find that this licensee has erected more wattling further out from low-water mark, in about 3 ft. of water at low spring-tides. In the enclosure formed by this erection he placed oysters taken from a depth of five fathoms, with the natural result that the oysters are dead, not having been able to stand the altered conditions of temperature, &c. There has been practically no result from Mr. Ewing's labours. This is much to be regretted, as he has conscientiously struggled to make his planting successful at some expense, but has failed for want of knowledge of the habits of oysters.

*Henry Baxter, Arrowsmith Bay.*—Since the date of my last inspection more oysters have been scattered along the foreshore of the oyster-bed, and there is a fair growth of young oysters. Oysters taken from deep water and placed in the shallow I find dead, having evidently been unable to adapt themselves to the altered conditions of habitat.

*William Davenport, Arrowsmith Bay.*—Since the date of my last visit I find that this licensee has erected wattling of scrub, and has scattered a quantity of oysters in the enclosure formed by this protection, but there did not appear to be any young oysters, and most of the brood oysters are dead. All the licensees named herein suffered considerably from large land-slips which took place eighteen months ago, and I found a great quantity of muddy matter was raised from the bottom by the least roll running. There was also much seaweed to be seen in all the beds, and the licensees told me that it gives them a great deal of trouble—it grows so quickly. This is a natural result in warm, shallow, well-sheltered bays. The fact that all the licensees failed to char the scrub used for wattling is fatal to the growth thereon of young oysters. I am now satisfied that the licensees of these beds will not succeed unless they erect stonewalls, cairns, and enclosures on their holdings.

*Pelorus Sound.*

I visited Mr. Percy Neame's foreshore in Mahau Sound on the 23rd January last. I found that absolutely nothing had been yet done by him to stock his beds.

*Black Point.*

*Alexander Maule.*—Mr. Maule has conscientiously laboured to make his venture successful. Every mode of culture has been tried, none having succeeded but the stonewall and cairn system. On the large rocks standing well out from low-water mark the growth of young oysters has been phenomenal, as also upon the seaward side of a low wall built loosely of stones by Mr. Maule. The licensee now sees that, to make the bed a payable one, stonewalls, cairns, and enclosures must be made along all suitable portions of the foreshore, and that the rocks must be cleared of all shellfish. These undertakings will be costly.

A. CARTER, Collector.

The PRINCIPAL ENGINEER-SURVEYOR of STEAMERS and CHIEF EXAMINER of ENGINEERS to the SECRETARY of the MARINE DEPARTMENT.

SIR,—

Principal Engineer-Surveyor's Office, Wellington, 29th April, 1898.

I have the honour to submit my annual report for the financial year ended the 31st March, 1898.

The work has gone on very smoothly, and a large increase of vessels has to be recorded more especially auxiliary-powered traders and pleasure-launches using light oils as a motive-power. This is a very handy driving power. The machinery is on the double-cylinder principle single acting, with an explosion every revolution in each alternate cylinder. The ignition after