

My report this year would not be complete without particular emphasis on the part played in industry by the Inspection of Machinery Branch of this Department. Prevention of accidents means increase in production in every phase of our industrial life, and it is interesting to note that our Inspectors of Machinery inspected 118,833 units of machines, lifts, cranes, and hoists, &c., during the current year. More interesting and pleasing is the fact that there were only 125 accidents concerned with these units and 4 deaths only, compared with 7 deaths from machinery accidents in the previous year. Apart from the factual situation emphasized by the above, our Inspectors of Machinery give valued service to owners by way of expert advice, and in general have a prestige in the community which is most satisfactory. Plans are in hand for an extension of the safety services rendered to owners and operatives in the hope that the present extremely low accident and death rates may be still further improved. Later in this report fuller details of this branch of the Department are included.

The usual preliminary inquiry by the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine was carried out in regard to various casualties to shipping during the year. Seven of these required further Magisterial inquiry, these being the "Stina"—"Rosina" collision off Cape Saunders, the loss of the m.v. "Haere" with all hands on the 28th May, 1947, the collision between the launch "Ionaero" and the vessel "Towerhill" in the Auckland Harbour, the collision between the fishing-vessels "Comet" and "Daisy Bell" in Auckland, the total loss of the fishing-vessel "Cowan" at Lyttelton, the collision of the vessels "Aranui" and "Coronation" in northern waters, and the stranding of the ferry vessel "Ngoiro" in Auckland Harbour towards the end of the year. Broadly speaking, the policy of the Department is to recommend formal Magisterial investigations in cases where (1) any ship is lost or abandoned, (2) any ship is materially damaged, (3) when there is any loss of life, and (4) where serious damage to any ship has been caused by the wrongful acts or default of a certificated officer.

ADMIRALTY CHARTS

The Department acts as agent for the sale of Admiralty charts and publications and maintains a stock at Head Office and at the main Mercantile Marine offices in the Dominion. The stock includes all charts of the Dominion and many other parts of the world to which ships trading to or visiting the Dominion may be diverted. The stock of foreign charts is still very large, a carry-over from the war years, when a very comprehensive stock had to be carried, but as new editions of charts no longer in demand are issued, old copies will be withdrawn and the charts in question deleted from our chart list. The correction to date of all Admiralty charts, which is an important condition of the agency, still continues on a large scale, due to the re-establishment of navigational aids, the clearing of mine-fields, &c. An estimate of the magnitude of the work involved may be appreciated when it is realized that no less than 10,000 hand corrections are made annually. During the year the existing chart of Otago Harbour (No. 2411) was cancelled and replaced by one showing corrections to waterwork at harbour entrance.

A request was made to the Hydrographer, Admiralty, suggesting that two new charts of New Zealand would be of great value to navigators—*i.e.*, one of the North Island, including the Three Kings, and the other of the South Island, including Stewart Island and the Snares. The Hydrographer has agreed to the request and has intimated that the new charts should be completed in about twelve months. The Hydrographer's action is very much appreciated and will earn the grateful thanks of navigators on our coasts. The eleventh edition, 1946, of the "New Zealand Pilot" was published during the year, and copies are on sale at Mercantile Marine offices.