

thereby it will be very gratifying. It is provided that certificates of service shall be issued to all persons who produce satisfactory evidence as to sobriety, experience, and good conduct who have held during the whole of 1909 the position for which a certificate is desired.

Other candidates not thus qualified by service are required to produce satisfactory evidence as to experience, sobriety, and good conduct, and shall pass an examination in the following subjects:—

- (a.) Working coal and timbering underground.
- (b.) Mine-gases, spontaneous combustion, and ventilation.
- (c.) Dealing with old workings and other sources of danger.
- (d.) Arithmetic and a knowledge of the Coal-mines Act and regulations.
- (e.) First aid to the injured.

The examinations are conducted by the same Board of Examiners who examine candidates for mine-managers' certificates, assisted by the Inspectors of Mines.

There are two grades of certificates—viz., underviewers' certificates and firemen and deputies' certificates.

The law therefore provides for the qualification by certificate of every official (and engine-driver), except the electricians, in all New Zealand collieries employing more than eight persons. Where less than eight persons are employed the manager need not hold a certificate, but must hold a permit from the Inspector of Mines. Other officials must be qualified as at the larger mines.

COAL-SHIPPING PORTS.

Westport.

A further improvement in the volume of shipping and in the depths of water on the Buller bar has taken place.

The output from the local collieries using this harbour amounted to 718,419 tons during 1909, being an increase of 49,970 tons on the output for the previous year. The returns show that the output has practically doubled within the past decade.

The Chairman of the Harbour Board, Mr. George Griffiths, reports that the volume of inward and outward shipping for the year was as follows:—

					Steamers.	Sailers.	Registered Tonnage.
Inwards	..	..	..	..	1,151	21	623,664
Outwards	..	..	..	..	1,152	20	622,566
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,246,230

being an increase of 63,150 tons over that of the previous year.

The port and its railway equipment are now capable of dealing with 30,000 tons of coal per week.

The Engineer to the Harbour Board, Mr. R. A. Young, M.Inst.C.E., reports that there has been an improvement in the depths of water on the bar at high water, inasmuch as the depths are more regular, being limited to from 20 ft. to 26 ft. at H.W.S.T.

The Board have recently imported a new suction dredge, the "Eileen Ward," of 1,000 tons capacity, which will supplement the powerful dredger "Rubi Seddon," which during the year lifted and carried out to sea 378,950 tons of material, at a cost of 3-6d. per ton.

The "Erskine" bucket dredger likewise lifted 155,700 tons, at a net cost of 7-5d. per ton.

Greymouth.

The following are the official returns of the Port of Greymouth, from whence is shipped the product of the Grey Coalfield. A small decrease in the registered tonnage of the vessels entering the port as compared with the previous year is recorded.

Average depth of water on the bar at high water, 21 ft.; average depth of water in river at high water, 19 ft. 7 in.

Number of days bar was navigable, 321.

Tonnage of vessels entering the port: 680 steamers, 337,167 tons register; 31 sailing-vessels, 4,552 tons register: total, 341,719 tons register.

Imports.—General, 54,621 tons.

Exports.—Timber, 31,181,000 sup. ft.; coal, 335,151 tons; bricks, 633 tons; coke, 2,596 tons; flax, 913 bales; wool, 1,464 bales; gold, 83,974 ozs.; general, 2,761 tons.

Berthage accommodation, 2,770 ft. A tidal dock in Kororo Lagoon, giving additional berthage accommodation of 2,000 ft., is now being constructed, 700 ft. having been completed.

I have, &c.,

FRANK REED,
Inspecting Engineer and Inspector of Mines.