

oil-launches throughout the Dominion. In many cases long distances had to be traversed to get to the place where the vessels could be surveyed. The necessity for such legislation was apparent in many cases where the structures of some of the ships dealt with had wasted to such an extent as to make them unsafe. The appliances for the safe navigation of the vessels and for life-saving were often found defective and insufficient. This new work has occupied the whole time of one Surveyor of Ships, and the work was not quite complete at the end of the financial year.

I met a great many of the engineers and steamship-owners during the year in different parts of the Dominion. The engineering trade generally has been busier this year than last year. This applies more particularly to the South Island. Shipbuilding has been fairly busy in Auckland and Dunedin, and most of the vessels that have been turned out do credit to the Dominion. Shipping interests will always, from our insular position, be of paramount importance. The recent additions to steamers engaged in the intercolonial trade would do credit to any country, and afford ample comfort to the traveller. The enterprise of the shipping companies is to be commended in bringing out such vessels to trade in these waters.

The Examiners of marine engineers, land engineers, land-engine drivers, and electric-tram drivers have had a busy time during the year, the official examination of electric motormen in New Zealand having been undertaken by the officers of this Department this year for the first time.

BOILERS INSPECTED.

The number of boilers inspected and for which certificates were issued during the year total 5,968. This section of the Department's work is still in arrears. Each year adds to the number of boilers that have to be dealt with, and the country to be traversed to get to them also covers a wider area. The weather-conditions have not been so favourable this year, and this made a considerable difference in some of the country districts where the roads are not properly formed and metalled. All the machinery driven by these boilers was also attended to and inspected.

The plans of new boilers submitted for the Department's ruling as to pressure, design, and scantlings total 498. These were all carefully examined before a decision as to the safe working-pressure to be granted was arrived at. The whole of the details were arranged amicably between the Department and the owner. The plan of deciding before construction as to the pressure to be granted seems to have met a want, for it secures uniformity of construction throughout the Dominion.

GOVERNMENT BOILERS AND MACHINERY.

Most of the Government boilers and machinery at their works and institutions have been inspected during the year. The total inspections made were 128, and consist of 84 boilers, 14 lifts, 16 oil-engines, 9 gas-engines, and 5 electric motors. Certificates were issued in each case, and repairs were carried out where necessary.

DEFECTS OF BOILERS AND FITTINGS.

A great many defects were found both in boilers and in their fittings. The total defects found numbered 1,006. Of this number 50 were very dangerous. Return No. 2 gives a complete list of the defects discovered.

NEW BOILERS.

The new boilers inspected during the year numbered 498, with a total horse-power of 6,441½. Of this number 313, of 3,232¾ total horse-power, were made in the Dominion.

During the year the percentage of imported boilers is greater than was the case during the previous year. This I consider a great loss to the Dominion and to those firms who have installed hydraulic and other appliances for dealing expeditiously with this class of manufactured goods, and who can turn out work that compares favourably with any imported boilers.

The following table shows the number and horse-power of the new boilers, and the districts to which they have gone :—

| District. | Local. | | Imported. | | Total. | |
|-------------------------|---------|--------------|-----------|--------------|---------|--------------|
| | Number. | Horse-power. | Number. | Horse-power. | Number. | Horse-power. |
| Auckland | 41 | 556¼ | 53 | 1,483 | 94 | 2,039¼ |
| Auckland South | 26 | 338¼ | 12 | 83 | 38 | 421¼ |
| Hawke's Bay | 22 | 130 | 9 | 65½ | 31 | 195½ |
| Taranaki | 23 | 312½ | 13 | 80 | 36 | 392½ |
| Wellington North | 38 | 505½ | 6 | 43¼ | 44 | 548½ |
| Wellington | 38 | 262¾ | 19 | 327½ | 57 | 590¼ |
| Marlborough | 7 | 108½ | ... | ... | 7 | 108½ |
| Nelson North | 3 | 8½ | 3 | 18 | 6 | 26½ |
| Nelson South | 6 | 34 | 6 | 156½ | 12 | 190½ |
| Westland | 11 | 180¼ | 6 | 98 | 17 | 278¼ |
| Canterbury | 34 | 262 | 17 | 145½ | 51 | 407½ |
| Canterbury South | 4 | 17 | 7 | 121 | 11 | 138 |
| Otago | 27 | 277¾ | 11 | 200½ | 38 | 478¼ |
| Southland | 33 | 239½ | 23 | 387 | 56 | 626½ |
| Totals | 313 | 3,232¾ | 185 | 3,208¾ | 498 | 6,441½ |