

24. H.M.S. "Veronica" was absent from New Zealand from April to the end of September, 1923, during which period she visited the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, and the Tonga, Samoa, and Fiji Groups. In October and November she was refitted and her ship's company carried out musketry practice at Auckland, since which she has visited ports in the vicinity of Auckland, New Plymouth, Wanganui, and Nelson.

25. "Laburnum" and "Veronica" will shortly leave for cruises in the Islands. "Laburnum" has recently been recommissioned and a considerable proportion of the old crew sent to England. "Veronica" will recommission early in May.

VII. RECRUITING FOR THE SEAGOING FORCES.

26. The following table shows the numbers finally entered during the period 1st April, 1923, to 31st March, 1924 :—

Regimental District.	Ordinary Seamen and Boys.	Stokers.	Artificers and Artisans.	Cooks and Stewards.	Other Ratings.	Total.
Auckland	18	2	3	4	2	29
Paeroa	4	..	..	..	..	4
Whangarei .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Hamilton	2	1	..	1	..	4
Wellington	4	3	1	..	1	9
Palmerston North ..	9	..	1	1	1	12
Napier	8	2	..	..	..	10
Hawera	2	3	..	..	1	6
Nelson	1	..	..	..	..	1
Christchurch	1	..	..	1	..	2
Dunedin	1	..	..	..	..	1
Invercargill .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Re-entries from United Kingdom	..	..	2	..	..	2
Totals	50	11	7	7	5	80

27. The following table shows the numbers discharged or dismissed during the period 1st April, 1923, to 31st March, 1924, after final entry :—

Cause.	Able Seamen, Ordinary Seamen, and Boys.	Stokers.	Other Ratings.	Total.
Serv ces no longer required, unsuitable, dismissed as a punishment	1	..	3	4
Desertion	5	..	4	9
Invalided	7	..	2	9
By purchase	5	..	3	8
Totals	18	..	12	30

This loss is a percentage of 37.5 of the numbers entered during the period.

28. Recruiting for stokers has been suspended since October, 1923. At present only boys are required as recruits.

29. Recruiting for the New Zealand Division is progressing but slowly, and arrangements have been made by which a Naval Recruiter (pensioner Master-at-Arms) will shortly tour the Dominion as an experiment. Coloured posters will be displayed, and booklets on "How to join the New Zealand Division of the Royal Navy" will, by the courtesy of the Post Office Department, be available in all post-offices. These steps, together with the visit of the Special Service Squadron, will, it is hoped, result in a larger number of recruits being obtained.

30. I hold a very high opinion of the qualities displayed by the recruits entered in New Zealand, and have no doubt whatever that this Dominion will, in time, provide a personnel second to none in discipline, efficiency, and *esprit de corps*. The men are keen, of fine physique, exemplary behaviour, and take a pride in their ship and in their work.

VIII. NEW ZEALAND ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE.

31. In October, 1922, enrolment of men in the New Zealand Royal Naval Reserve was begun, but the numbers entered have been small. The details of those entered during the period 1st April, 1923, to 31st March, 1924, are :—

Class A (Inactive)—Men discharged from the seagoing forces in New Zealand, other than those joining Class A (Active Reserve). These men are liable to come up for naval service, in the event of war, if required, within ten years of discharge from the seagoing forces, if not then over forty years of age

33 seamen ratings.
4 signal and W/T ratings.
31 engine-room and stoker ratings.
1 armourer's crew.
1 plumber.
10 steward and cook ratings.
— tings.
80