

REGISTRATION OF SHIPPING.

On the 31st December last there were on the register of vessels in the Dominion 123 sailing-vessels of 19,392 tons register, 276 steamers of 91,750 tons register, and 165 motor-vessels of 3,228 tons register, as compared with 127 sailing-vessels of 19,812 tons register, 266 steamers of 77,557 tons register, and 162 motor-vessels of 3,293 tons register at the end of the previous year. The number of seamen and boys employed on board was 3,859, as compared with 3,623 at the end of 1923.

EXAMINATIONS OF MASTERS AND MATES.

This year shows an increase in the total number of candidates for certificates for seagoing vessels, the total number being 93, as against 71 of last year. The failures this year numbered 56, and successes 37, which is a slightly decreased percentage of the passes of the previous year. Of the total, 66 were candidates for foreign-going certificates, and 27 were candidates for certificates for home-trade vessels, and of these 37 passed; whilst 12 were desirous of obtaining certificates for vessels which trade within restricted limits, of which 7 passed. The percentage of passes in all grades was 46. Voluntary examination in compass deviation, 2 passes, 3 failures.

EXAMINATIONS OF MARINE ENGINEERS.

During the year 222 candidates passed their examinations and 111 failed. Of those who passed, 100 were engineers of seagoing ships, 10 were engineers of steamers plying within restricted limits, 32 were engineers of seagoing motor-propelled ships, and 80 were engineers of such boats plying within restricted limits.

EXAMINATIONS OF LAND ENGINEERS, ENGINE-DRIVERS, AND ELECTRIC-TRAM DRIVERS.

These examinations were held at the various offices of the Inspectors of Machinery throughout the Dominion, at the regular intervals provided for in the regulations—namely, during the months of February, May, August, and November. In addition, a few special examinations were granted, but the holding of special examinations is not encouraged, as it is considered that the regular examinations are of sufficient frequency, as compared with the number of candidates offering, and candidates are now expected to arrange that they may attend the scheduled examinations.

The full list of places where examinations were carried out is shown in an appended return, as also is the number of candidates examined at each place. The classes of certificates for which examinations were held were: Extra first-class engineer, first-class engine-driver, second-class engine-driver, steam-winding-engine driver, electric-winding-engine driver, locomotive-engine driver, traction engine-driver, locomotive- and traction-engine driver, and electric-tram driver. The total number of candidates examined was 649; of this number 474 passed and 175 failed in their examinations.

Recognition of Certificates from Abroad.—Under section 49 of the Inspection of Machinery Act, 1908; certificates of the appropriate grade were granted, without examination, to holders of certificates from abroad as follows: United Kingdom, 1; Canada, 1; South Africa, 1; Queensland, 2; New South Wales, 1; Victoria, 1; Western Australia, 1; Tasmania, 2.

LIGHTHOUSES, HARBOURS, AND GOVERNMENT STEAMER.

Lighthouses.—The duties connected with the maintenance of the various coastal lighthouses have been satisfactorily carried out during the year, the lighthouses being tendered by the s.s. "Tutanekai." The inspection of lighthouses has been continued during the year, and good results have manifested themselves.

The sum of £80,467 6s. 2d. has been received as light dues on shipping during the year, as compared with £76,867 15s. 6d. in the previous year.

Harbours.—The work of overhaul and maintenance of navigation aids in harbours under the control of the Department has been satisfactorily carried out by the various Harbourmasters and by the master of the s.s. "Tutanekai." The latter has also attended to the coastal buoys and beacons under the control of the Department during the vessel's periodical trips.

The sum of £842 18s. 7d. has been collected as pilotage and port charges in respect of harbours under the control of the Department, as compared with £768 13s. 1d. during the previous year.

SHINGLE AND SAND BEACHES AND FORESHORES.

The Department's assets in these beaches and foreshores around the coast have been very carefully guarded, with the result that a sum of £4,393 19s. 1d. has been collected during the year in respect of rents and royalties, as compared with £2,909 0s. 4d. during the previous year.

SURVEY OF SHIPS.

Certificates have been granted to 250 steamers, 520 oil-engine vessels, and 28 sailing-vessels, as compared with 267, 540, and 30 respectively during the previous year. Attached are returns of seagoing vessels, included in the above, to which certificates were issued.

It is to be noted that there has been a reduction of 39 in the number of certificates issued for all vessels, and that of this deficiency 27 are home trade and 12 foreign-going, while for seaworthiness 155 certificates have been issued this year, as against 123 for the year 1923–24.

Under the heading of inspection of machinery the year has been more successful in point of the number of inspections made. During the twelve months 363 new boilers were inspected, as compared to 275 during 1923–24, while the total boiler inspections for the year was 7,944, as against 7,780 for the previous period, an increase of 164.