

on board a scow at Catherine Bay, Great Barrier. H.M.S. "Dunedin" proceeded there, and, taking the man to Auckland for hospital treatment, returned next day to the Gulf to complete her exercises. Independent exercises were carried out by H.M. Ships "Veronica" and "Laburnum" during the ensuing week.

23. On 15th December, H.M.S. "Diomedé" (Captain Martin J. C. de Meric, M.V.O., Royal Navy) arrived at Auckland on completion of repairs in England, and in company with H.M.S. "Dunedin" remained there until 3rd February, 1931, to give Christmas leave, &c.

24. As a new departure, H.M. Ships "Veronica" and "Laburnum" did not spend Christmas at Auckland, but proceeded to Wellington and Napier respectively for this season. They returned to Auckland, H.M.S. "Veronica" on 26th January, having also visited Tauranga and Kawau, and "Laburnum" on 23rd January, having visited Tokomaru Bay and Port Fitzroy.

25. All ships were present for the Auckland Anniversary Regatta, the occasion being celebrated by ships being dressed overall, H.M.S. "Diomedé" proceeding into the stream, where she was open to visitors.

26. On 2nd February 250 seamen and marines from H.M. Ships "Dunedin" and "Diomedé," including two field guns' crews and the Flagship's band landed for a ceremonial march through the streets of Auckland.

27. H.M.S. "Veronica" sailed on 1st February to carry out an independent cruise in New Zealand waters, and arrived at Napier at 7.0 a.m. on 3rd February. H.M.S. "Laburnum" sailed on 2nd February for a similar purpose, arriving at Whangarei on the following day.

News of the disastrous earthquake in Hawke's Bay was received from H.M.S. "Veronica" by me at Auckland, where, with H.M. Ships "Dunedin" and "Diomedé," I was on the point of sailing for Russell.

I therefore proceeded with all speed with the two ships to Napier, having taken on board doctors, nurses, and special medical stores, &c.

The three ships remained at Napier for a week rendering all possible aid, and only returned to Auckland when no longer required at the scene of the disaster, H.M.S. "Veronica" proceeding into dock to survey the damage received during the earthquake.

A full report of the work carried out during this period has already been submitted to you.

28. H.M.S. "Laburnum," which had been recalled to Auckland in case she would be required to render further assistance, continued on her cruise and visited Whangarei, Whangaroa, New Plymouth, Nelson, Lyttelton, Dunedin, Timaru, and Wellington, at which port she was present on the concluding day of this report.

The assistance of divers and shipwrights was lent by H.M.S. "Laburnum" to M.V. "Hauraki" which ran aground whilst being berthed at New Plymouth. Considerable damage was done to the ship's bottom, but temporary repairs were effected which enabled the ship to proceed to Auckland to dock.

29. While H.M. Ships "Dunedin" and "Diomedé" were at Auckland two serious fires, one of considerable magnitude, broke out simultaneously in the city on the night of 16th February. As it appeared that the resources of the fire brigades and police would be fully taxed in coping with both the fires and regulating the traffic, parties of seamen and marines were landed to render assistance.

30. In view of the Hawke's Bay disaster, I cancelled the arrangements that had been made for H.M. Ships "Dunedin" and "Diomedé" to proceed to Australia to carry out exercises with the Australian Squadron, and the two ships proceeded to Russell.

31. On 26th February I relinquished command of H.M.S. "Dunedin" to Captain Martin J. C. de Meric, M.V.O., Royal Navy, and my broad pendant was transferred to H.M.S. "Diomedé."

H.M.S. "Dunedin" sailed for England on 28th February via Sydney, Surabaya, Singapore, Colombo, Aden, Port Said, Malta, and Gibraltar to undergo a large refit at Chatham.

From information I have received the impression created at all those ports by a cruiser of the New Zealand Division was most favourable. At Surabaya the Dutch authorities gave a very warm welcome to H.M.S. "Dunedin" as an appreciation of the hospitality received by the Netherlands Squadron in New Zealand.

32. H.M.S. "Diomedé" then visited Whangaroa, Port Fitzroy (where gunnery exercises were carried out with H.M.S. "Veronica"), Picton, and Nelson, at which latter port the ship was on 31st March. H.M.S. "Veronica" visited Akaroa and Lyttelton.

33. During the year under review the warm welcome and hospitality received by H.M. ships at the various ports visited made it evident that the people of the Dominion appreciate the presence and work of the New Zealand Division of the Royal Navy.

The customary return entertaining, both official and semi-official, carried out by all H.M. ships as is incumbent upon them, has augmented the mutual good feeling which exists and is a valuable channel through which the reason for the existence of the New Zealand Division and the importance of its duties can be made known without involving any charge upon public funds.

#### (B) H.M.S. "Philomel."

H.M.S. "Philomel" (Commander Nelson Clover, Royal Navy, relieved in February, 1931, by Commander Edward L. Berthon, M.V.O., Royal Navy) continues to act as training-ship for the New Zealand Division and Naval Depot Ship at Auckland.

2. As stated in my last report, owing to the postponement of the building of the barracks on account of financial stringency, arrangements were made for the ship to be surveyed to ascertain how long she could continue to act in her present capacity. The ship was accordingly docked and a survey carried out in June, 1930, which showed that, with certain repairs, she would last for at least another four years. The sum of £2,000 has been spent on her during the year to effect these necessary repairs.